



City of Aspen 2022 Community Survey

June 2022

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Aspen Community Survey Method Overview



What?

Anonymous, web-based community survey



Who?*

678 Aspen Respondents

Data was weighted to represent Aspen Census Norms (Age, Gender, Income); +/- 4% Margin of Error

To ensure the community at large was able to voice their opinions, the survey was made available to the public through varied efforts:



How?

- 6,297 letters were distributed to all registered voters and APCHA residents
- Emails were sent to prior survey respondents that opted-in to participating in future community discussions
- Paid Instagram & Facebook ads geographically targeting the Aspen area
- Notice in the City of Aspen Utility Mailer
- Posts on the City of Aspen social media pages
- Advertisements in local media such as the Aspen Times and Aspen Daily News



When?

Surveys were collected from February 25th – March 29th of 2022

Updates to Method in 2022 vs. 2019

		2022		2019
Streamlined Length	15 minutes shorter Median completion time	12:51	←	27:24
More broad-based Community Response	Number of partial completes	1173	←	1019
	# complete after cleaning / & removing duplicates	678	←	439
	# of responses from 18-34 year-old residents <i>(Results weighted to reflect Census norms both years)</i>	159	←	53
	Spanish language completed responses	33	←	0
	# of paper surveys requested/sent	19	←	3
Clarified Strategic Focus Areas	How Strategic Focus Areas were presented when asking about satisfaction <i>(see right)</i>	Named & Described	←	Named

Strategic Focus Areas

(as named & described in the survey)

Make Aspen Livable (City government ensures Aspen is a great place to live and work, including access to childcare, healthcare, housing, recreation, internet, and transit)

Foster Economic Vitality (City government develops a healthy, diverse local economy through commercial & residential development and local shopping)

Customer-Focused Government (City government continuously improves services and processes based on feedback, data, best practices, and innovation)

Ensure a Safe Community (City government ensures Aspen is a safe City to live, work, and visit)

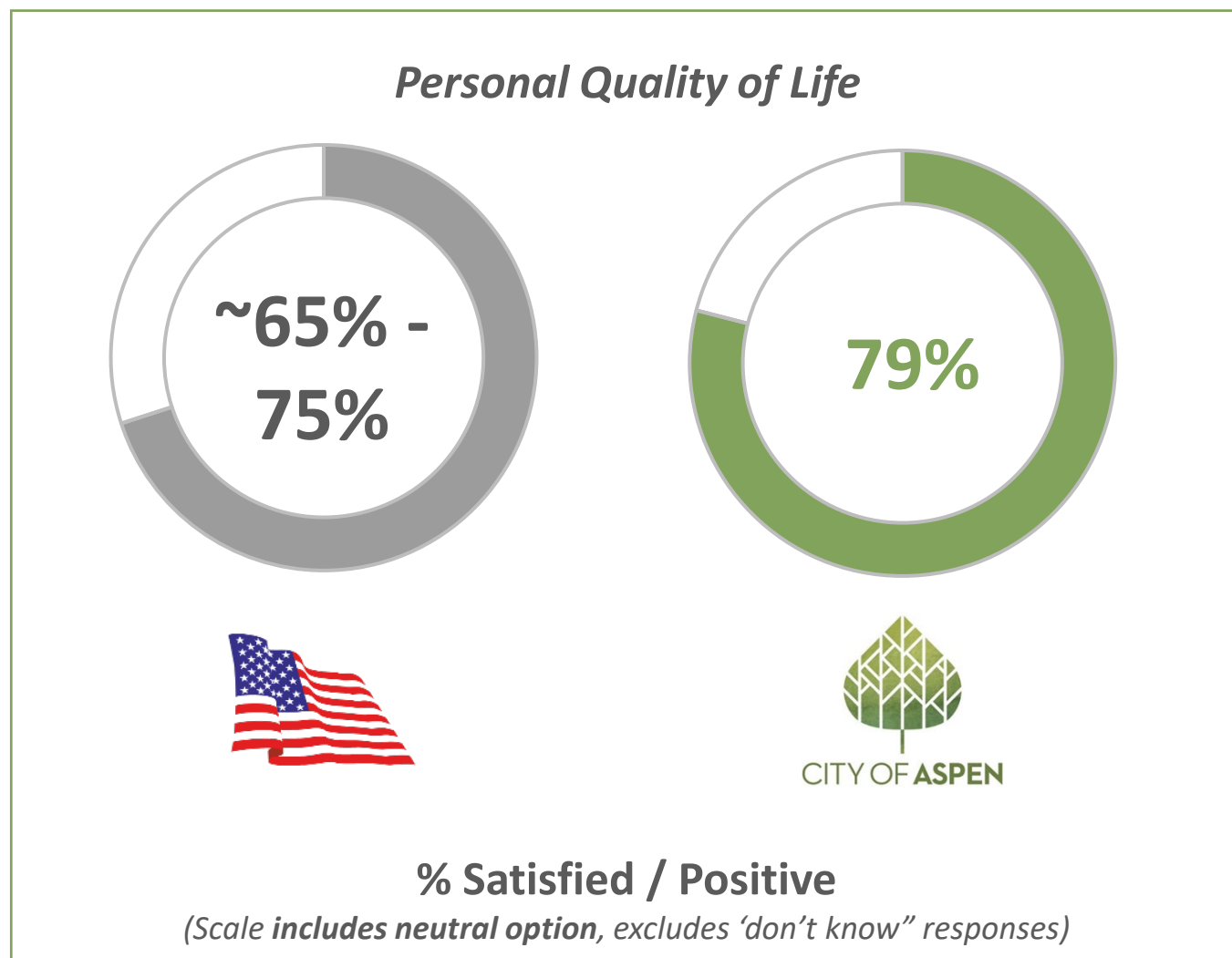
Maintain City of Aspen's Financial Health (City government responsibly manages taxpayer dollars, community investments, and financial reserves)

Support Community Engagement (City government regularly shares information that is helpful & trustworthy, is responsive, encourages and listens to feedback, and provides meaningful ways to participate)



Overall Findings

Satisfaction with Personal Quality of Life

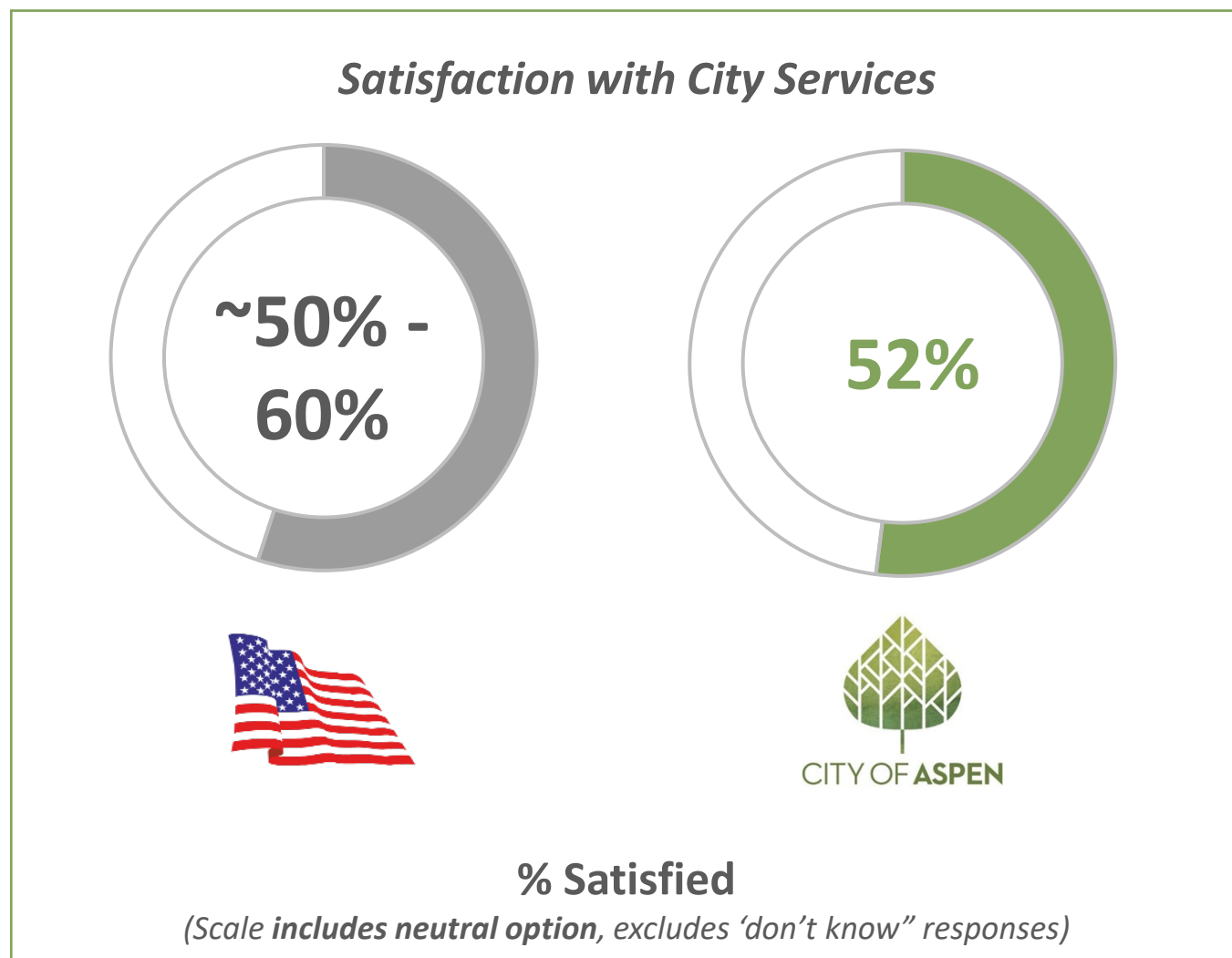


While this level of satisfaction with personal quality of life is **good by US standards**, this **represents a significant decline for the City of Aspen overall.**

Percent satisfied with their quality of life dropped from 88% (+/- 5%) in 2019 to 79% (+/- 4%) in 2022 (↓9 points); a 4-point change in percent satisfied is statistically significant with 95% confidence.

Peers and other Colorado cities were analyzed for pre vs. post COVID shifts, and the City of Aspen's drop in satisfaction is more noteworthy than comparisons. This indicates that **Aspen's challenges extend beyond the impact of COVID-19.**

Satisfaction with City Services

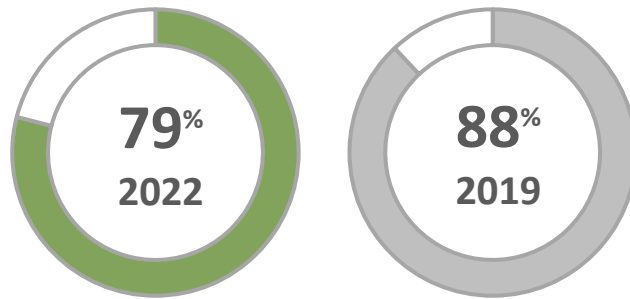


About half of residents are satisfied with the quality of services provided by the City of Aspen, about 1/4 are neutral with their satisfaction of City services, and about 1/4 are dissatisfied with quality of City services.

While this is in line with average satisfaction with city services in the US, **this represents a 19-point reduction vs. 2019** and the **lowest satisfaction recorded since the start of measuring this metric in 2006.**

Quality of Life - Satisfaction Trends

% Satisfied with Personal
Quality of Life ↓ 9 Points



Who is Least Satisfied?

- 18 - 44 Years Old
- Household Income under \$100K
- Residents negatively impacted by COVID

Why are they Dissatisfied with Quality of Life?

- More dissatisfied with Aspen's Livability and Economic Vitality
- Dissatisfied with lack of affordable shopping & restaurants

COVID's Impact on Quality of Life in Aspen

39%

Quality of Life is worse now versus before the COVID-19

24%

Better quality of life now vs. before COVID-19

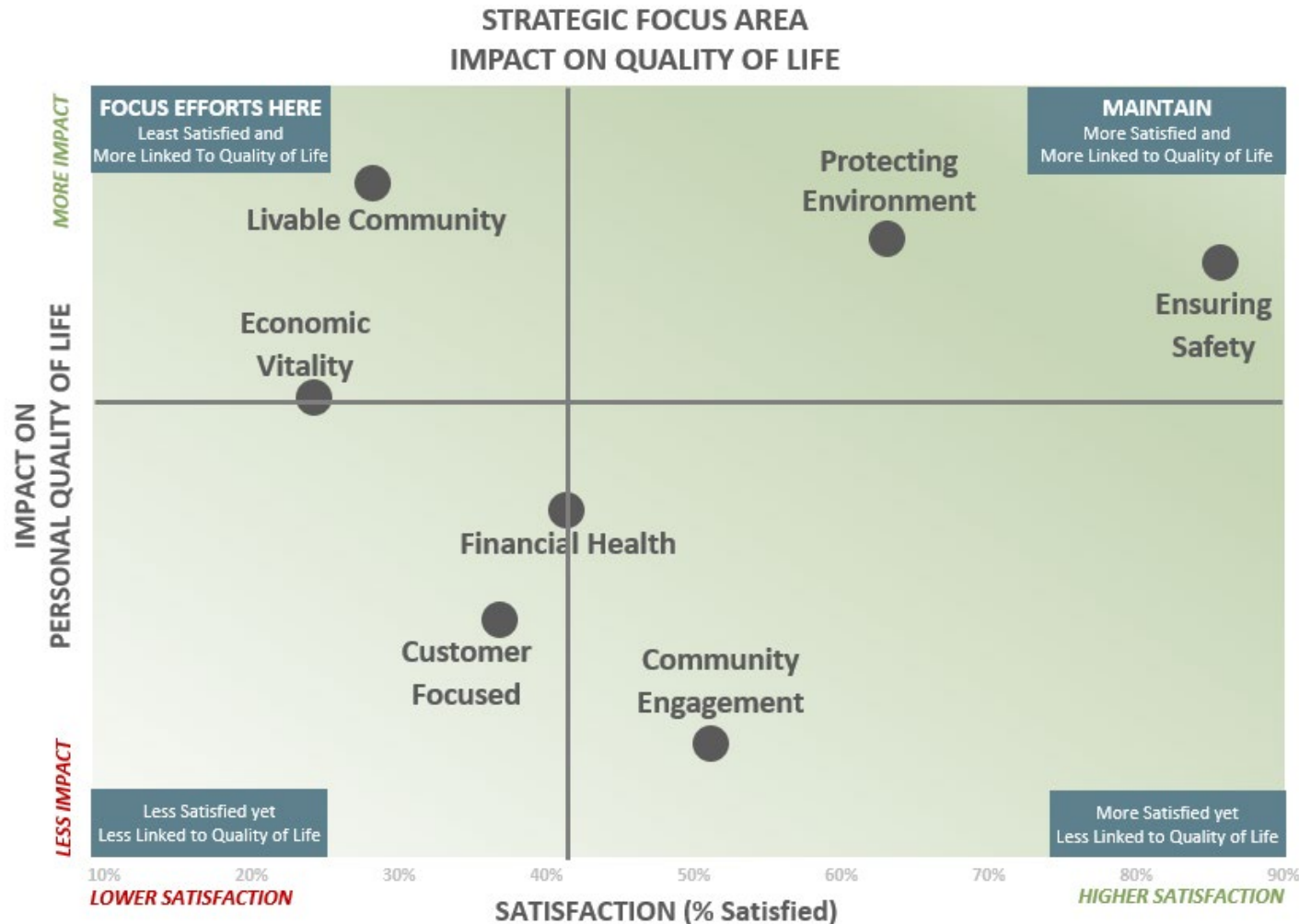
Satisfaction with Personal Quality of Life
by Impact of COVID on Quality of Life

Total <i>N</i> = 677		Worse after COVID <i>258</i>		Unchanged after COVID <i>247</i>		Better after COVID <i>160</i>	
Dissat	Satisfied	Dissat	Satisfied	Dissat	Satisfied	Dissat	Satisfied
14%	79%	23%	68%	8%	81%	3%	94%

Aspen vs. Total US - % Satisfied with Quality of Life
Post COVID vs Pre COVID

	POST COVID	PRE COVID	Point Change
City of Aspen 2022 vs 2019	79%	88%	↓ 9
Total US Range Late 2021 vs 2019	65-75%	65-75%	↓ 2

Key Driver Analysis –Strategic Focus Areas Most Impacting Personal Quality of Life



When analyzing the connection between tested strategic focus areas and residents' quality of life:

- **Making Aspen Livable** and **Fostering Economic Vitality** had both lowest satisfaction ratings and the strongest connection with *Personal Quality of Life* satisfaction.
- **Customer-Focused Government, Community Engagement, & Financial Health** were less connected with *Quality of Life* but were more connected with *Satisfaction with City Services*.

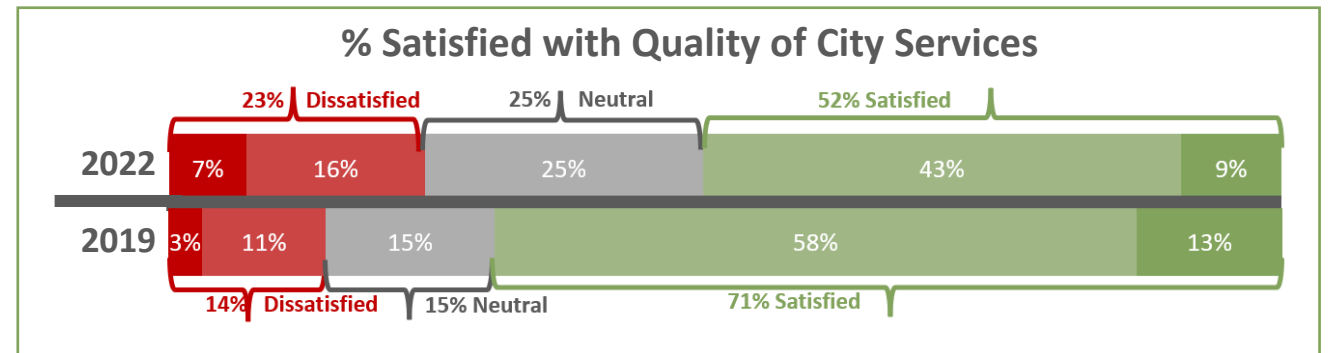
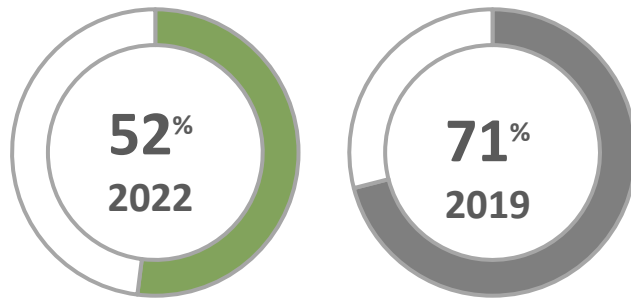
FOR REFERENCE:

Make Aspen Livable (City government ensures Aspen is a great place to live and work, including access to childcare, healthcare, housing, recreation, internet, and transit)

Foster Economic Vitality (City government develops a healthy, diverse local economy through commercial & residential development and local shopping)

Quality of City Services - Satisfaction Trends

% Satisfied with Quality of City Services ↓19 Points










Who is Least Satisfied?

- Business owners
- Males
- Year-round residents
- 35-54 years old

Why are they Dissatisfied with City services?

- More dissatisfied with Aspen's community engagement, customer-focused government, and maintaining the City's financial health
- Concerns over developers/commercial development and who the city is prioritizing.

Satisfaction by Strategic Focus Areas

			% Satisfied (Satisfied + Very Satisfied)
	Ensure a Safe Community	45%41%	86
	Protect the Local Natural Environment	44%19%	63
	Support Community Engagement	41%11%	52
	Maintain City of Aspen's Financial Health	33%8%	42
	Customer-Focused Government	32%5%	37
	Make Aspen Livable	22%7%	29
	Foster Economic Vitality	21%4%	25

SCORE DETAILS

% Selecting Satisfied + Very Satisfied (Top 2 boxes among 5)








Neutral option was included in scale.

Question: For each City of Aspen priority below, please rate your level of satisfaction with the City's performance:

Trended Satisfaction by Strategic Focus Areas

2022	% Satisfied	% Very Satisfied
2019	% Satisfied	% Very Satisfied

% Satisfied (Satisfied + Very Satisfied)		Point Change
2022	REF 2019	2022 vs 2019

 Ensure a Safe Community	<div> <div>45%</div> <div>41%</div> </div>	86		88	↓ 2
	<div> <div>49%</div> <div>39%</div> </div>				
 Protect the Local Natural Environment	<div> <div>44%</div> <div>19%</div> </div>	63		77	↓ 14
	<div> <div>55%</div> <div>22%</div> </div>				
 Support Community Engagement	<div> <div>41%</div> <div>11%</div> </div>	52		67	↓ 15
	<div> <div>53%</div> <div>14%</div> </div>				
 Maintain City of Aspen's Financial Health	<div> <div>33%</div> <div>8%</div> </div>	42		55	↓ 13
	<div> <div>41%</div> <div>14%</div> </div>				
 Customer-Focused Government	<div> <div>32%</div> <div>5%</div> </div>	37		42	↓ 5
	<div> <div>34%</div> <div>8%</div> </div>				
 Make Aspen Livable	<div> <div>22%</div> <div>7%</div> </div>	29		45	↓ 16
	<div> <div>35%</div> <div>10%</div> </div>				
 Foster Economic Vitality	<div> <div>21%</div> <div>4%</div> </div>	25		41	↓ 16
	<div> <div>35%</div> <div>6%</div> </div>				

SCORE DETAILS

% Selecting Satisfied + Very Satisfied (Top 2 boxes among 5)
Neutral option was included in scale.¹²

Question: For each City of Aspen priority below, please rate your level of satisfaction with the City's performance:

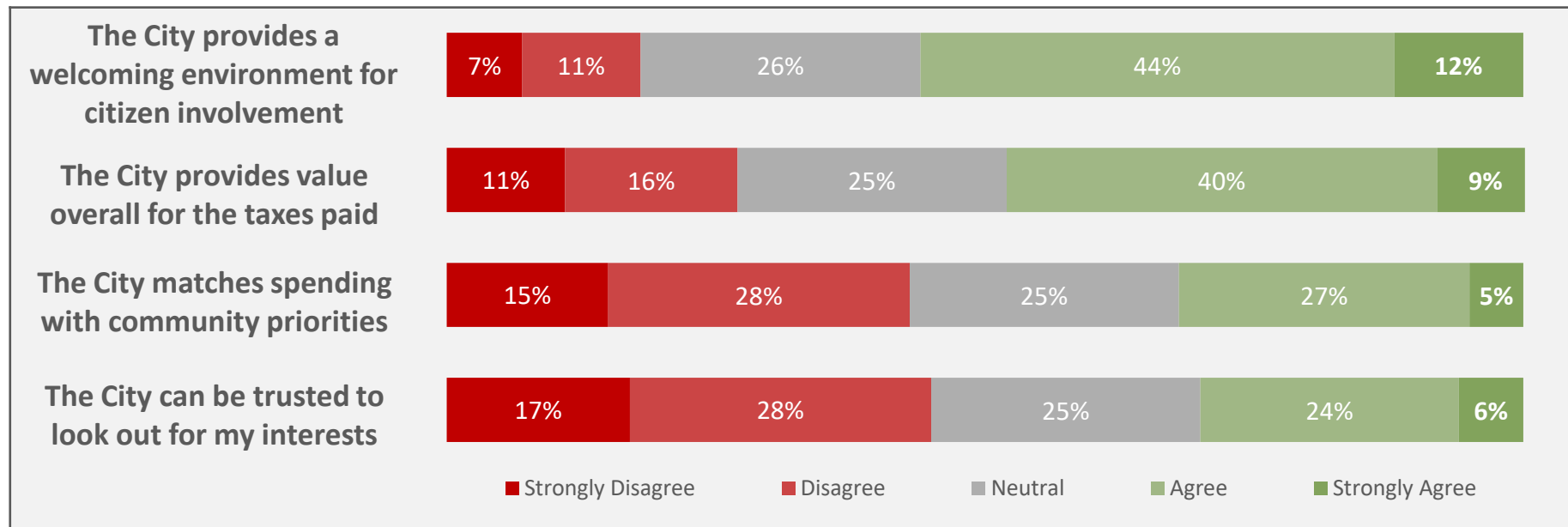


Findings by Strategic Focus Area

Customer-Focused Government



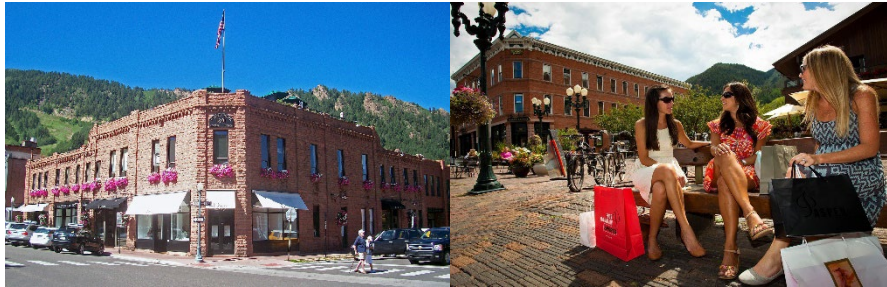
- About half of the residents agree that the City provides a welcoming environment for citizen involvement (56%) and provides value overall for the taxes paid (49%)
- Only about 1/3 of residents agree that that the City matches spending with community priorities (32%) and that the City can be trusted to look out for residents' interests (30%)



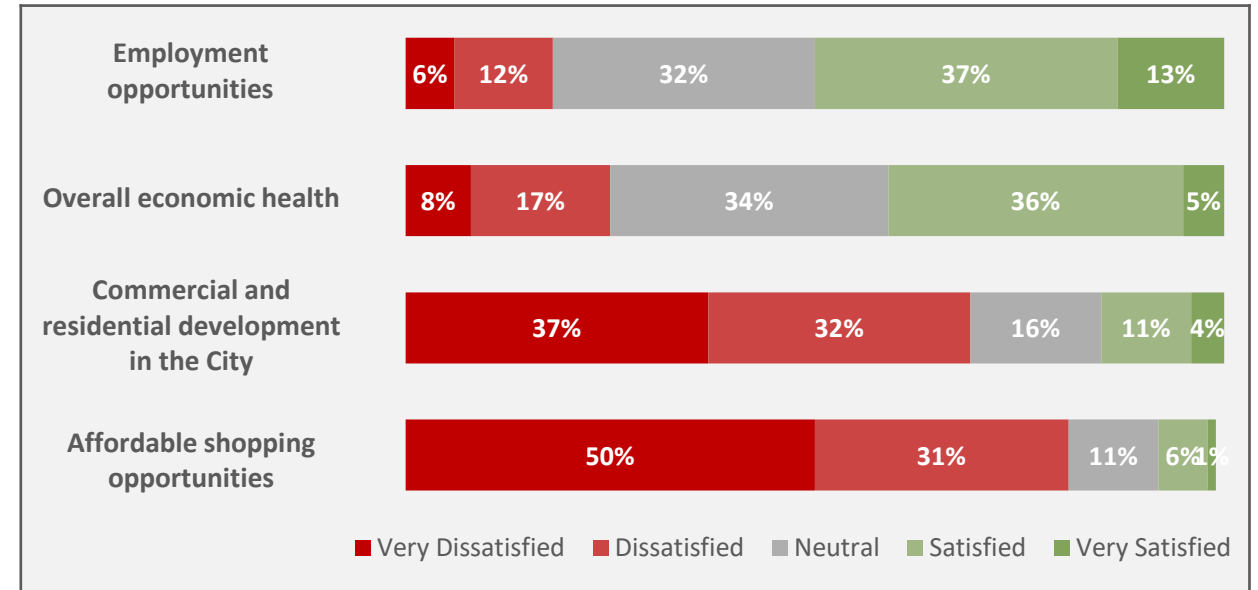
Fiscal Health & Economic Vitality



- 81% are dissatisfied with affordable shopping opportunities in Aspen (just 7% are satisfied)



- 69% are dissatisfied with commercial and residential development in the City (15% are satisfied)





Specific Areas of Interest

Infant Care and Early Childhood Needs

- Most placed importance on taking action to improve childcare needs

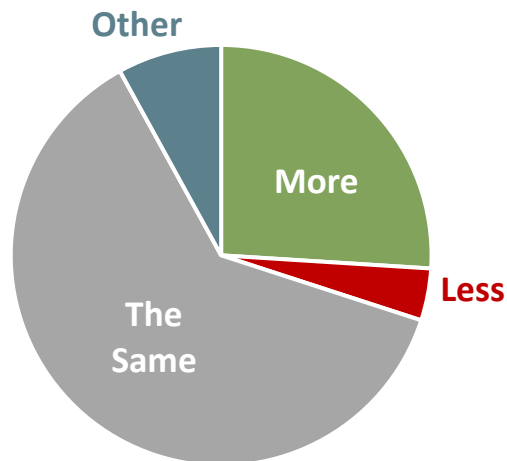
	 % Rating Important	 % Rating Not Important
Expand high-quality early education programming	60	14
Increase the number of early childhood education space	60	12
Increase the number of infant care spaces	58	15



Community Policing

- Most desire the **same** amount of community policing efforts
- About 1/4 desire **more** community policing efforts

Desired Amount of Community Policing in the Future



Top Community Policing Priorities

Patrolling on foot /
Talking to residents
& tourists

58%



Wildlife interaction
education (bears,
moose, deer, elk,
mountain lions, etc.)

44%



Patrolling on bikes

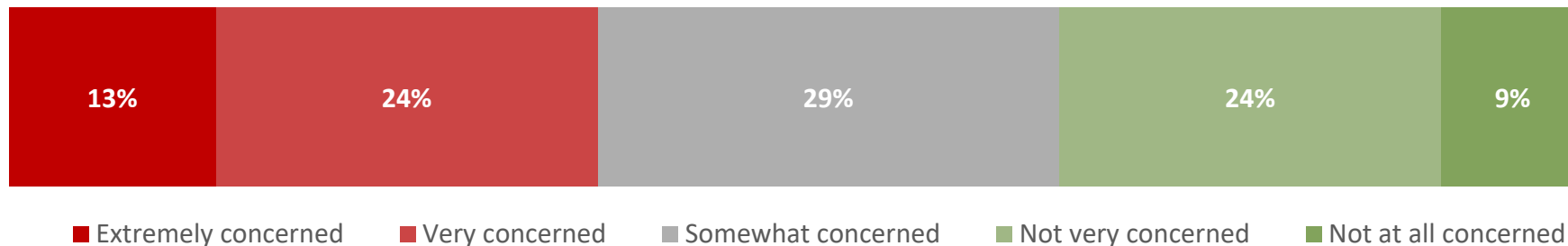
34%



Evacuation Concerns

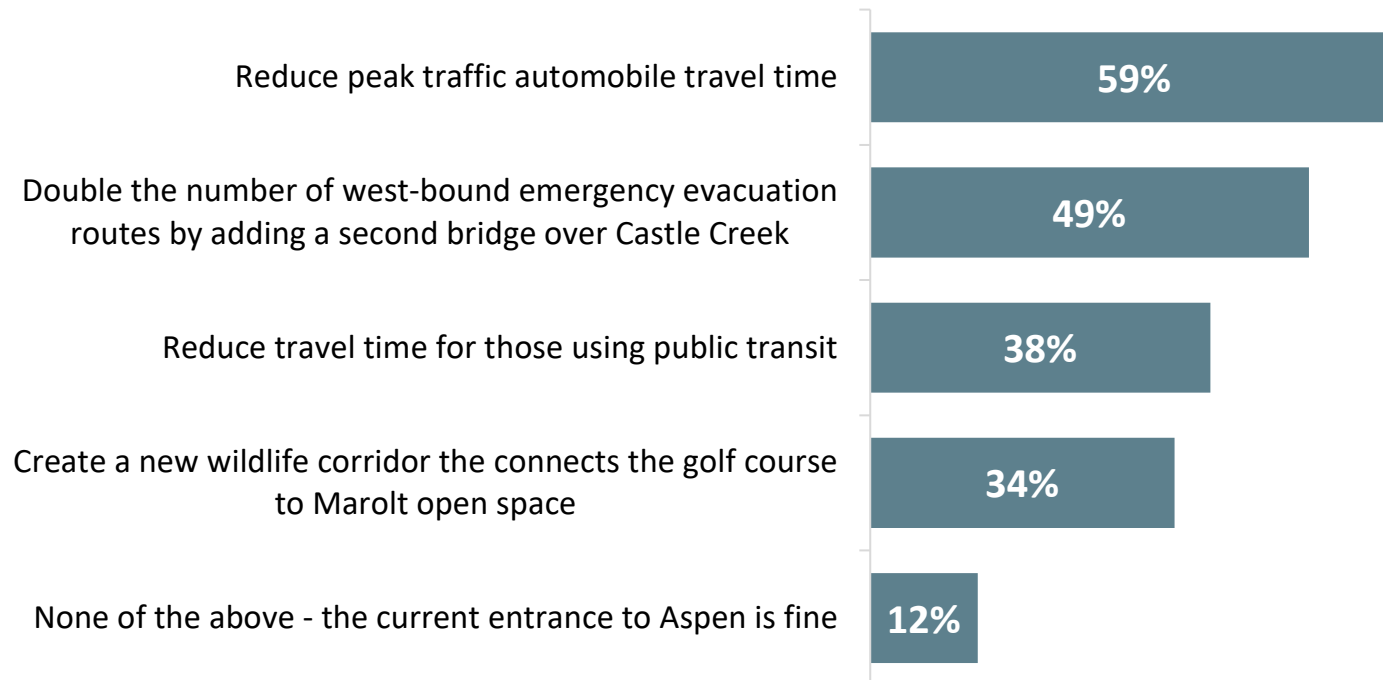
- **37% of residents are very concerned about evacuating town** in the event of an emergency, 29% are somewhat concerned, and **34% are not concerned**

Level of Concern Regarding Evacuating Town in the Event of an Emergency



Castle Creek Bridge Priorities

Top Castle Creek Bridge Replacement Priorities



- Reducing peak traffic automobile travel time (59%) and doubling the number of west-bound emergency evacuation routes (49%) were the top 2 priorities cited by over half of the residents
- Only 12% of residents think the current entrance is fine



Open-Ended Bridge & Traffic Feedback from Respondents

“That bridge into town needs to be replaced tomorrow! 15-20 years is ridiculous!”

“About the Castle Creek Bridge. If you want to build a second one for cars and keep the old one for pedestrian and bike use only that would be awesome and in case of emergency cars can use it to evacuate.”

“Improve traffic with bermed entry/corridor through Marolt open space and a beautifully landscaped pedestrian bridge that still allows open space usage of Marolt. Build bridge over Castle Creek to Main Street.”



Highway 82 looking east over the Castle Creek Bridge in 1986



Castle Creek Bridge photographed in October 2011

Example of separate bike/pedestrian bridge

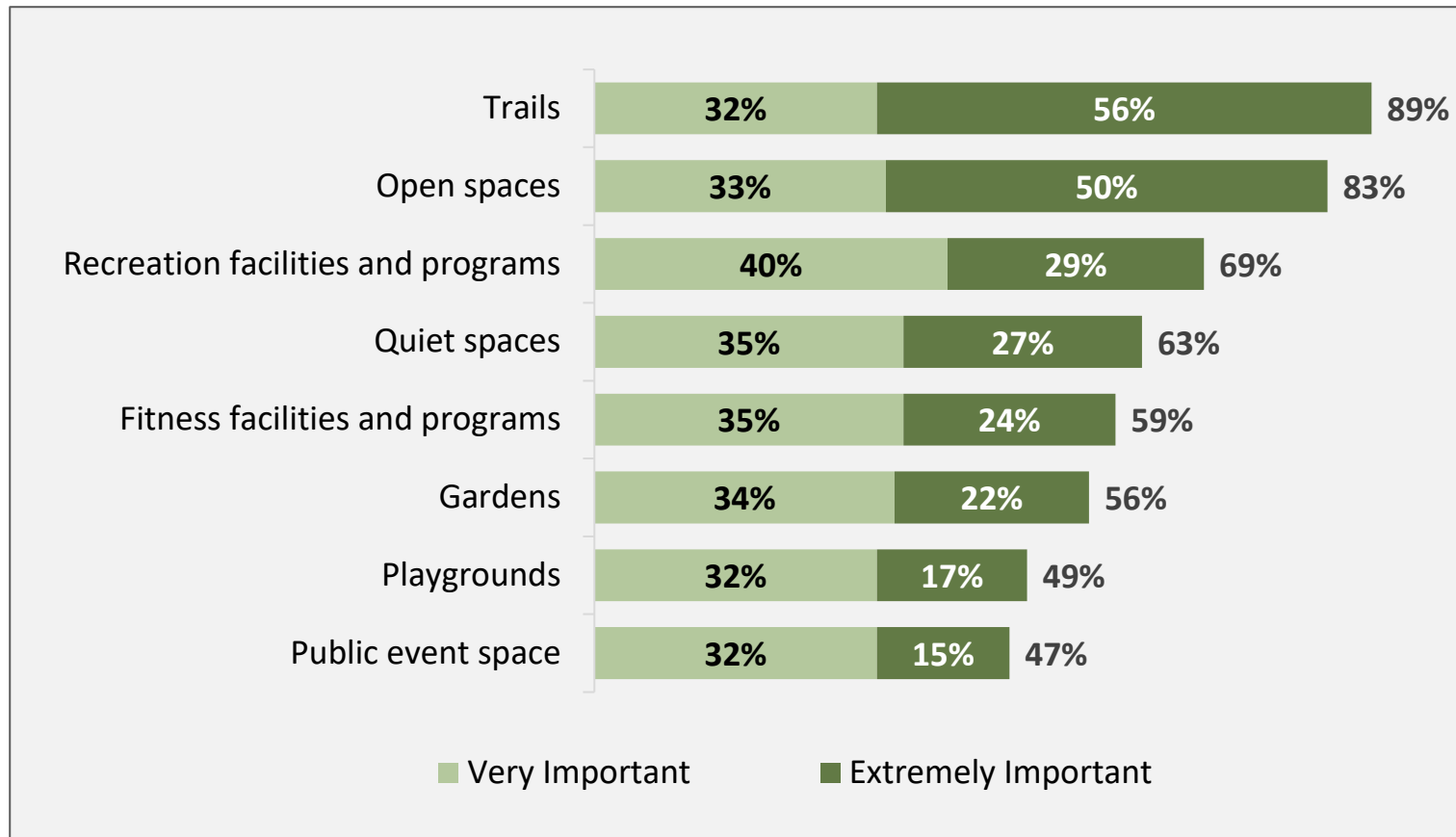


Example of car bridge with pedestrian walkway



Parks and Open Space Amenities

➤ **Trails** (88%) and **open spaces** (83%) were important to the largest proportion of residents





Recommended Action

Recommended Action

- **Better communicate** the strategic plan, goals, and priorities for the City
 - Clarify **who being prioritized** and action being taken
 - Clarify **what is being prioritized** and action being taken on this front
 - Consider **educating the community on strategic focus areas** and action plans one focus area at a time
 - **Launch community action/involvement groups** to encourage involvement
- **Launch an effort to improve affordability and reduce income inequalities** - this is an urgent need
 - Learn from other cities facing similar challenges with income inequalities and high cost of living
- **Prioritize continued efforts to address affordable housing for the whole community** (both workforce and community)
- **Further involve the community with commercial and residential development decisions**
 - Ensure community engagement sessions are held at a time when working residents can attend
 - Prioritize developments that address City gaps - affordable shopping, dining, spots where locals can gather
 - Revisit checks/balances and controls with developers
- **Focus on bringing diverse groups together to strengthen sense of community**
- **Continue community policing efforts** with an emphasis on patrolling (on foot and/or on bikes) and wildlife interaction education
- **Develop a plan for the Castle Creek Bridge replacement**, prioritizing reducing peak traffic automobile travel time and increasing evacuation routes



THANK YOU

